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GOV. RITTER RELEASES CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Gov. Bill Ritter today released Colorado's first [Climate Action Plan](#), an ambitious call to action that establishes firm goals and clear strategies to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions, and also provides simple suggestions so everyone in Colorado can address global warming.

"Climate change is our generation's greatest environmental challenge," Gov. Ritter said. "It threatens our economy, our Western way of life and our future. It will change every facet of our existence, and unless we address it and adapt to it, the results will be catastrophic for generations to come.

"I strongly believe we can make a difference. In setting and achieving the goals in this Colorado Climate Action Plan, we will continue to expand the New Energy Economy, show leadership as a state, increase our energy security, and call on the federal government to take strong action."

Greenhouse gas emissions from human activity have grown by 35% in Colorado from 1990 to 2005. The largest contributors are electricity consumption (36%) and transportation (23%). The Climate Action Plan, which includes an agricultural carbon sequestration and offset program, establishes two greenhouse-gas reduction goals: 20% below 2005 levels by 2020 and 80% by 2050.

The agricultural program would enlist farmers and ranchers to participate in a regional consortium to sequester carbon and reduce emissions on agricultural lands, and sell the resulting carbon credits over a multi-state region. Other strategies in the Climate Action Plan include:

- Move toward "clean car" standards to ensure automakers reduce emissions in new vehicles.
- Work collaboratively to reduce emissions from investor-owned utilities by 20% by 2020 and create reasonable goals for other utilities.
- Expand voluntary, and over time phase in mandatory, emission reporting requirements for major greenhouse gas producers.
- Adopt energy-efficiency programs to reduce the demand for electrical energy.
- Expand renewable energy opportunities.
- Partner with research institutions and industry to develop clean-coal technologies, and urge the federal government to accelerate financial investments and incentives.

"The success of this very balanced plan depends on everyone doing their part and taking personal responsibility for our future," Gov. Ritter said. "I have no doubt that we can turn the challenges we face into opportunities, keep our economy strong and vibrant, and preserve Colorado's environment for our children and our grandchildren."

Specific Action Items Gov. Ritter Will Take Under This Climate Plan:

- By the end of this year, issue a climate change executive order that establishes a 20 percent greenhouse-gas emissions-reduction goal by 2020, and directs all state agencies to join a statewide effort to achieve this goal.
- Direct the Colorado Department of Agriculture and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to work with public and private entities to develop an agricultural carbon offset program.
- Direct the Colorado Air Quality Control Division to propose clean car greenhouse gas emission standards within one to two years.
- Direct the Governor's Energy Office to launch an Industrial Energy Efficiency Program to encourage large industrial customers to implement efficiency measures.
- Direct the Governor's Energy Office to provide bi-annual reports on the status of renewable energy development across Colorado, and suggest measures to accelerate development.
- Call on Congress and the President to accelerate development of clean-coal technologies.
- Direct the Colorado Department of Natural Resources and CDPHE to resolve hurdles to geologic sequestration and identify potential sequestration sites in Colorado.
- Request the Colorado Public Utilities Commission to seek from each utility within its jurisdiction an Electric Resource Plan that will include an analysis of how the utility will reduce emissions. The order will also instruct appropriate state agencies to remove barriers and help utilities achieve these goals.
- Amend the April 2007 "Greening of State Government" executive order to establish a 75 percent by 2020 waste diversion goal for state government.
- Direct the Colorado Air Pollution Control Division to begin examining guidelines that would phase in mandatory reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by major emitters.

About Climate Change and Its Impact on Colorado

- In the last century, global temperatures have increased 1.4 degrees Fahrenheit.
- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates that global temperatures could increase 3.6 to 10.4 degrees by the end of this century under a "business as usual" scenario.
- The past 12 years in Colorado were the warmest on record.
- Colorado is experiencing or could experience:
 - Warmer and shorter winters, thinner snowpack and earlier runoff.
 - Less precipitation, with more falling as rain rather than snow, and longer droughts.

- Widespread pine beetle infestations in Colorado forests.
- Longer and more intense wildfire seasons.
- Lower river flows, less hydroelectric power production, degraded water quality and more stress on reservoirs.

Five Easy Steps You Can Take to Address Climate Change

- Travel smart: Walk, bike, use mass transit, drive a hybrid vehicle, drive slower, keep tires fully inflated and carpool.
- Waste not, watt not: Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.
- Live smart at home: Use a low-flow showerhead, insulate your water heater and pipes, open windows at night in summer, lower the thermostat in winter, buy Energy Star appliances, and hang your clothes out to dry.
- Buy green power: If your electric utility offers wind power, buy it; install solar panels on your home.
- Reduce, re-use, recycle: Buy recycled and recyclable products, use reusable shopping bags, say “no” to plastic shopping bags, recycle household waste, and compost kitchen scraps and yard waste.

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